



310 Maple Park Avenue SE
PO Box 47387
Olympia, Washington 98504-7387

(360) 705-7846 • Fax (360) 705-6820
www.wsdot.wa.gov/ACCT

Michael Harbour
*Representing the Washington
State Transit Association*

Reg Clarke
*Representing the Washington
Association of Pupil
Transportation*

Liz Dunbar
DSHS Deputy Secretary

Glen Hallman
Consumer Representative

Paula J. Hammond
WSDOT Chief of Staff

Andrew Johnsen
*Governor's Transportation
Policy Advisor*

Marilyn Mason-Plunkett
CTA-NW

Marcia Riggers
*Office of Superintendent of
Public Instruction*

Bernice Robinson
Consumer Representative

Legislative Members:

Senator Margarita Prentice
Senator Jim Horn
Senator Mark Doumit
Senator Larry Sheahan

Representative Fred Jarrett
Representative Mark Miloscia
Representative Alex Wood

Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT)

Friday, August 6, 2004
9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
WSDOT Large Commission Board Room (1D2)
Olympia, WA

Meeting Summary

Attendance

Council Members

Paula Hammond, WSDOT
Representative Mark Miloscia
Allan Jones, OSPI
Andrew Johnsen, Governor's Transportation Policy Advisor
Bernice Robinson, Citizen Representative
Michael Harbour, WSTA
Marilyn Mason-Plunkett, CTA-NW
Doug Porter, DSHS

WSDOT Staff

Robin Phillips, ACCT Administrator
Shelley Pedro
Don Chartock
Cathy Silins
Seija Blaylock
Steinun Priem

Welcome and Introductions – Paula Hammond

Paula Hammond, WSDOT Chief of Staff and ACCT Chair, opened the meeting by introducing herself. The council and audience then introduced themselves.

Approval of the Meeting Notes – Paula Hammond

Ms. Mason-Plunkett motioned to approve June 2004 meeting notes as written. Motion seconded with condition that misspelling of name be corrected and meeting notes approved.

Budget and Staff Announcements – Cathy Silins

Budget

Ms. Silins directed members to the budget spreadsheet and explained the budget information through June 2004. The contract with CTAA for technical assistance is moving forward. There has been a great deal of staff activity, reflected under salary and benefits on the budget. WSDOT has finalized the Trip Planner contract with ODOT and soon more expenses will appear under the Trip Planner line item.

Ms. Hammond asked if there is a workplan somewhere in the notebook. Don Chartock pointed out that an excel spreadsheet listing the workplan elements that the council has approved is in the April 2004 section.

Ms. Hammond suggested that at the next meeting the Council assess the ACCT work plan and update it if needed for the remainder of the biennium.

Staff Announcements

Ms. Silins announced Debby Carr as the new Contract Specialist 2. Debby came from Thurston County Health Department and has many years of working with contracts. She will be supporting all programs in the Public Commute Options office and from time to time may attend ACCT meeting(s) to explain contract opportunities.

9:40am – Ms. Hammond welcomed Representative Miloscia.

Outside of the Agenda - Paula introduces Faith Trimble –

Faith Trimble from FLT Consulting gave a brief summary as to the results of the Leadership Summit on Coordinated Special Needs Transportation held on June 14. Approximately 130 people attended the Summit. Paula Hammond and Andrew Johnsen spoke at the forum. One of the outcomes of the forum was Representative Ed Murray's agreement to host a joint hearing of the Transportation and Social Service Committees and champion the issues of the ACCT Council and the Puget Sound United We Ride. In addition, the Council should receive a letter from Bruce Agnew; director of the Cascadia Center and host of the Leadership Summit forum requesting that ACCT follow up on the offer from Rep. Murray to ensure there is a joint hearing. The forum participants voted on issues important to public transportation. The voting results showed that the top three funding priorities in the next two years are: Regional Demonstration Projects, WA/OR Trip Planner and Performance Tracking Systems. Also, as part of the voting results the level of government responsible for funding special transportation needs (in priority order); State, Local then Federal. Ms. Trimble distributed a handout to the Council.

Ms. Trimble also informed the council that she had the opportunity to participate in a panel with the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials in Montana. In Idaho all transportation and social services dollars are joined and pay for trips requests through a central service.

Texas is moving all human service transportation functions to the DOT and New Mexico issues smart cards inclusive for food stamps and for transportation.

It was suggested information on other states and what they are doing be provided to the council.

Washington Transportation Plan – Charlie Howard, Theresa Smith

Charlie Howard, the Director of Strategic Planning and Programming at WSDOT explained that his staff is required by law to put together a Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The approach of the WTP is access in transportation for special needs clients and customers. Mr. Howard and Ms. Smith explained that the presentation's focus is on the population that cannot drive, how they access the transportation system and what strategies can be employed to address their needs.

Phase 1 of the transportation plan consists of: data compilation, analysis and strategy development. The plan is to create a statewide transportation data library, analyze statewide trends and system conditions, identify key strategic issues and develop effective strategies and share what's been learned.

Persons with special transportation needs fall into four broad groups:

- The elderly
- People with disabilities
- Children
- People with low income

Transportation Challenges in Rural Areas:

- In rural areas, transportation is normally provided by automobile. With limited options and long distances, providing services to people who cannot drive is a challenge.

Rural Health Care Challenges:

- People who need access to transportation in rural communities find it difficult to seek frequent treatments such as dialysis and chemotherapy/radiation. If conditions go untreated due to lack of access, they may escalate to severe problems.

Intercity Bus Service:

- Intercity Bus Services provides the only connections to urban centers for many rural communities. The main providers are Greyhound, Olympic, Northwestern Trailways, Wheatland Express and Amtrak. Effective this month Greyhound is abandoning many stops. With these recent changes there is added pressure on local and state funded services to connect the smaller communities to the larger ones. In few rural areas, fixed route service can provide connections between communities for residents and visitors; however, some communities have no alternatives.

Public Transit Services that Support Access:

- Public transit has a significant role in transporting people who do not drive through their fixed routes, dial-a-ride services and special bus fares for the elderly, children and persons with disabilities.
- Public transit contributes 90% of the dollars spent on special needs transportation.

Comments and discussion on the presentation:

The figure of 60,850 disabled persons in Washington State seems very low and under-rated. There are actually 103,000 persons with developmental disabilities alone, 17% are ADA eligible. To clarify the figure of 60,850 is the persons with disabilities actually receiving assistance from DSHS.

Suggestion made not to get rid of double counting. Just footnote as to where and what is being double counted.

Effective August 2004, Greyhound has abandoned some of their stops. One of these areas is Walla Walla. Don Chartock has attended meetings in Yakima and Walla Walla to discuss a short term plan and long term plan for alternative transportation modes.

Discussion on public transit pointed out that there are two types of funding: urban transit funds and rural transit funds. So if your county is considered an urban county you get urban transit funds and the rural part of the county does not get service. So there are many areas that public transit does not cover.

In King County there are actually 140 transportation providers that will serve 1 of the 4 categories of the special needs population.

The mission of the ACCT council is to remove barriers to access transportation services statewide. Significant local, state, federal and private money is spent on accessing transportation.

In 2003-2005 Washington State Legislature allocated \$30.9 million for rural mobility, special needs and Paratransit programs. The breakdown is as follows: \$6.9 million for Rural Mobility capital and operating grants, \$6 million for formula allocation to rural and small urban transit agencies, \$14 million for Special Needs/Paratransit for the 26 Transit agencies and \$4 million for Special Needs/Paratransit for non-profit agencies in urban and rural areas. WSDOT also administers the FTA grants of \$11 million: \$7.2 million for rural public transportation, \$1.2 million for Intercity transportation and \$2.6 million for elderly and persons with disabilities. The JARC funding is not identified as it is a discretionary grant received for three years, but not last year so it is not a guarantee. Suggestion was to footnote JARC as a possible source of funds.

Comments on the state's role in transportation access: it's not enough and more progress needs to be made. The local and federal governments have stepped up to the plate, but outside of Medicaid, the state provides less than 1.5% of the funding available. In conclusion if any of these issues are to be addressed the state needs to come forward.

There was also discussion that although ACCT needs to continue to focus on better coordination between services there should also be focus on policy and planning.

Mr. Johnsen comments that Mr. Howard, his team and the rest of the department should be applauded for the work they have done.

If anyone has any information, more accurate information and/or additional statistics please provide them to Robin Phillips so she can forward the comments to Theresa Smith.

In conclusion the schedule for adoption of the WTP is summer/fall of 2005. The WTP is intended to guide the 2007/2009 biennial budget proposals for the commission.

Annual Report: Strategic Plan, Outline of the Report – Robin Phillips

Ms. Phillips gave a brief summary of the strategic plan. She pointed out that some of the wording on the plan has changed and that the plan is still open for comments. The goals listed are new to the plan. Page 2 of her presentation lists some of the ways the council will identify and address barriers, what will need to be done to focus on results, how the council will increase advocacy and receive continued funding.

Ms. Phillips presented a draft outline of the annual report. At the next ACCT meeting she will have a draft of the report based on this outline. If anyone has things to change or contribute please email Robin at phillir@wsdot.wa.gov or Seija at blaylos@wsdot.wa.gov.

Trip Planner Cost Benefit Analysis – Seija Blaylock

The Regional Trip Planner is an on-line database that provides information to the public on transportation providers and their service including routes and timetables.

Ms. Blaylock discussed the Regional Trip Planner Cost-Benefit Analysis draft. The cost numbers were derived after intense discussions with the Information Technology department, and has already been reviewed by the IT finance analysts. Ms. Blaylock pointed out the recurring costs and non-recurring system costs charts on page 17. The initial development cost is \$1,052,000. She points out that on page 32 there is a minimum-maximum costs chart reflecting a plus/minus 10% from the original system costs. Ridership increases are conservative estimates at 0.5-2.0% since some studies estimate that systems similar to the RTP increased ridership from 5 to 13%.

Doug Porter voiced the concern that saved employee time was counted as quantitative monetary savings and wanted the section moved to qualitative savings instead.

Ms. Blaylock comments that one of the purposes of trip planner is to create a comprehensive map of the public transportation available in Washington State and then at some point of the private transportation. The information provided by the RTP will allow DOT administrators to work with transportation providers in fulfilling need in areas not covered. Once the program is on-line ACCT staff will be able to track what requests are made.

Homeless Children Transportation – Don Chartock

Mr. Chartock explained that a few years back, the McKinney-Vento federal legislation was passed stating that all school districts are required to provide transportation to students if they become homeless regardless of location or distance traveled. McKinney-Vento has become a high administrative expense to schools. About a year and a half ago Senator Patty Murray was able to get one million dollars for Washington State to assist in homeless children's transportation and develop some pilot projects on how to more effectively provide transportation to the homeless student population. Don Chartock, Allan

Jones and others from the state have been working on developing how they are going to make sure these projects get developed. Grants will be announced middle of August with projects scheduled to start around October.

Allan Jones commented that the law requires the transportation be provided to the child's school of origin, not just to a school. If need be, the bus must cross state lines and school boundaries to get the child to the school of origin. This service is required as long as the child is homeless. If permanent housing is found during the school year then the transportation is required to be provided until the end of that school year. At this time there are no specifics as to the cost of McKinney-Vento to Washington, but last school year some individual school districts spent \$700,000. There is no federal money allocated for McKinney-Vento, but if schools do not provide this service then they lose federal funding.

United We Ride Grant Opportunity – Don Chartock

Along with the United We Ride Award Washington earned grant money. Mr. Chartock explained the money is now available; however, instead of distributing the funds amongst the 5 states that won the award the grant is being split among all 50 states and the territories. This leaves an average funding amount of \$35,000.00 per state. ACCT decided that rather than distribute the grant to the entire state that each community present a proposal and the funds will be awarded to a project.

Comments from Council and Audience –

Marilyn commented that several of the non-profit transportation providers have been working on a self-insurance risk pool. The risk pool has been formed, will be called the Non-Profit Insurance Program and goes into effect August 20th.

Jim Seeks from Hopelink reported on the Mt Si Community Shuttle. The shuttle is a dial-a-ride service covering North Bend and the Snoqualmie area. In 6 months of operation it has transported over 5,900 passengers and in the month of July when ridership was expected to fall there were about 1000 riders transported. The program has recently received a new van from Metro.

12:05pm – meeting adjourned.

Next meeting –

Where: Washington State Department of Transportation building
310 Maple Park Ave
Olympia, WA

When: Friday, October 1, 2004

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.